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FILED

May 14 2024

Mark B. Busby
CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
OAKLAND

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
OAKLAND DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

QUENTIN CARL HELGREN,

Defendant.

CASE NO. 4:24-mj-70730-MAG

NOTICE OF PROCEEDINGS ON OUT-OF-DISTRICT ARREST WARRANT PURSUANT TO RULES 5(c)(2) AND (3) OF THE FEDERAL RULES OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE

Please take notice pursuant to Rules 5(c)(2) and (3) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure that on May 15, 2024, the above-named defendant was arrested pursuant to an arrest warrant (copy attached) issued upon an

- ☐ Indictment
- ☐ Information
- ☒ Criminal Complaint
- ☐ Other (describe):

pending in the Eastern District of Virginia, Case Number 3:24-mj-46.

In that case, the defendant is charged with violating 21 U.S.C. §§ 846 and 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(C),

1 Conspiracy to Distribute and Possess with the Intent to Distribute 50 Kilograms or More of Marijuana.
2 DESCRIPTION OF CHARGES: Conspiracy to Distribute and Possess with the Intent to Distribute
3 50 Kilograms or More of Marijuana.

4 PENALTY:

5 Maximum 20 years imprisonment;
6 \$250,000 fine
7 Minimum 3 years supervised release
8 Mandatory: \$100 special assessment
9 Forfeiture

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11 Date: May 14, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

12 ISMAIL J. RAMSEY
13 United States Attorney

14 /s/ *Thomas R. Green*
15 THOMAS R. GREEN
16 Assistant United States Attorney
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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of Virginia

United States of America

v.

QUENTIN CARL HELGREN

Case No. 3:24mj4p

Defendant

ARREST WARRANT

To: Any authorized law enforcement officer

YOU ARE COMMANDED to arrest and bring before a United States magistrate judge without unnecessary delay(name of person to be arrested) QUENTIN CARL HELGREN,

who is accused of an offense or violation based on the following document filed with the court:

- ☐ Indictment ☐ Superseding Indictment ☐ Information ☐ Superseding Information ☒ Complaint
☐ Probation Violation Petition ☐ Supervised Release Violation Petition ☐ Violation Notice ☐ Order of the Court

This offense is briefly described as follows:

Conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute 50 kilograms or more of marijuana, in violation of 21 U.S.C. Sections 846 and 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(C)

Date: May 10, 2024SLMS

Issuing officer's signature

City and state: Richmond, Virginia

Hon. Summer L. Speight, US Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

Return

This warrant was received on (date) _____, and the person was arrested on (date) _____
 at (city and state) _____.

Date: _____

Arresting officer's signature

Printed name and title

This second page contains personal identifiers provided for law-enforcement use only and therefore should not be filed in court with the executed warrant unless under seal.

(Not for Public Disclosure)

Name of defendant/offender: Quentin Carl Helgren

Known aliases: Carl Helgren, Carl Quentin Helgren

Last known residence: _____

Prior addresses to which defendant/offender may still have ties: NA

Last known employment: NA

Last known telephone numbers: _____

Place of birth: Wisconsin

Date of birth: _____

Social Security number: _____

Height: 6'3" Weight: 185

Sex: M Race: W

Hair: BR Eyes: BR

Scars, tattoos, other distinguishing marks: _____

History of violence, weapons, drug use: NA

Known family, friends, and other associates (name, relation, address, phone number): Caitlin James (possible girlfriend)

David Stephen Helgren (brother)

FBI number: NA

Complete description of auto: _____

Investigative agency and address: Richmond DEA
111 Greencourt Rd, Richmond, VA 23228

Name and telephone numbers (office and cell) of pretrial services or probation officer (if applicable): _____

Date of last contact with pretrial services or probation officer (if applicable): _____

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of Virginia



United States of America

v.

QUENTIN CARL HELGREN

Case No. 3:24mj46

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of April 2023-November 27, 2023 in the county of Chesterfield/Henrico in the
Eastern District of Virginia, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

21 USC Sections 846 and 841(a)(1)
 and (b)(1)(C)

Offense Description

Conspiracy to Distribute and Possess with the Intent to Distribute
 50 Kilograms or More of Marijuana

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

SEE ATTACHED AFFIDAVIT

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Reviewed by AUSA/SAUSA:

Erik S. Siebert

Complainant's signature

TFO David Philips

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: May 10, 2024

Judge's signature

City and state: Richmond, Virginia

Hon. Summer L. Speight, US Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, David S. Philips, a Task Force Officer with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Justice, Eastern District of Virginia, being duly sworn, states as follows:

Introduction

1. I am a law enforcement officer of the United States within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2510(7) and am empowered to conduct investigation of, and to make arrest for, the offenses enumerated in Title 21. I have been a law enforcement officer for the Richmond (Virginia) Police Department (“RPD”) since 2002, a Narcotics Detective in Special Investigations Division since 2006, and in 2017, was assigned to the Drug Enforcement Administration as a Task Force Officer. As a Task Force Officer, I am a “Federal Law Enforcement Officer” within the meaning of Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41(a)(2)(C), that is, a government agent engaged in enforcing the criminal laws and duly authorized by the Attorney General to request a search warrant. Prior my current assignment as a Task Force Officer, I investigated narcotics and vice related crimes for RPD from 2006 through 2017. In my work as an RPD Narcotics Detective, and currently as a DEA Task Force Officer from 2017 to the present, I have participated in numerous criminal investigations, a substantial number of which involved drug trafficking. I have conducted and participated in physical and electronic surveillance, including court authorized wire interceptions, planned and participated in the execution of several hundred search warrants, and conducted over a thousand interviews and debriefings of individuals to include confidential sources, cooperators, suspects, and citizens, as well as reviewed numerous recorded conversations and narcotics correlated records. Through my training, education, and experience, I have become familiar with the manner in which individuals and groups organize to

conduct their illegal operations, as well as means generally employed to avoid detection by law enforcement. Among other duties, I am currently involved in investigations that focus on an illegal drug trafficking organization operating in and around the metro-Richmond area with multiple jurisdictions.

2. I have attended classes and courses conducted by local, state, and federal agencies regarding the importation, transportation, and distribution of illegal drugs. I am knowledgeable about state and federal drug laws. I have participated in numerous drug trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime investigations that have resulted in the arrest of numerous members of several different international and domestic drug trafficking organizations (DTO), and the seizure of currency, assets, and drugs. Several of these investigations have employed electronic surveillance as an investigative technique that I have assisted with. I have directed and participated in hundreds of searches of the residences and businesses of suspected drug traffickers for evidence of criminal activity. I have also conducted and participated in the debriefing of many drug traffickers and money launderers, through which I have learned valuable information regarding the techniques used by DTOs to distribute drugs. Additionally, I have testified in numerous grand jury proceedings related to the investigation of individuals involved in drug trafficking and money laundering. As a result of my training and experience, I am familiar with the way in which DTOs illegally traffic, transport, and distribute drugs, and the way in which they launder the proceeds derived from their drug distribution activity. I have been certified as an expert witness in the field of narcotics in the City of Richmond Circuit Courts and have testified for the Commonwealth on numerous occasions. I have also been certified as an expert witness in the field of narcotics in United States District Court and have testified for the Government in this capacity.

3. I present this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint and arrest warrant for Quentin Carl HELGREN ("HELGREN"), charging that starting in or about April 2023, continuing through November 27, 2023, in the Eastern District of Virginia, Northern District of California, and elsewhere within the jurisdiction of this Court, HELGREN, along with other co-conspirators, did knowingly and intentionally combine, conspire, confederate, and agree with other persons, to commit the following offenses against the United States: to knowingly and intentionally distribute and possess with the intent to distribute 50 kilograms or more of a mixture and substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana, a Schedule I controlled substance, in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 846 and 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(C). Specifically, HELGREN conspired to possess and transport large loads of marijuana from the Northern District of California to the Eastern District of Virginia aboard a private aircraft.

4. The facts set forth in this Affidavit are based on my personal participation in this investigation and from information provided by Special Agents, Task Force Agents, and Police Officers (collectively referred to as the "Agents") from various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, and on my experience, training, and background as a DEA Special Agent. This affidavit is prepared solely for establishing probable cause to support the charge in this Criminal Complaint. I have not included every fact known to me concerning this investigation and have set forth only the facts necessary to support the charge in the Criminal Complaint and the issuance of an arrest warrant.

Probable Cause

5. The United States, including the Drug Enforcement Administration, is conducting a criminal investigation into HELGREN's role as a trafficker of bulk marijuana from California

to Virginia regarding violations of 21 U.S.C. §§ 846 and 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(C), conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and distribute 50 kilograms or more of marijuana.

6. In December 2022, the Richmond Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration began an investigation into a bulk marijuana distributor in the metro-Richmond area, hereafter referred to as Cooperating Defendant. Cooperating Defendant had been identified as a marijuana distributor and event promoter who hosted weekly marijuana pop-up events in the metro Richmond, Virginia area between 2022 and 2023. Cooperating Defendant was also identified as the owner of a marijuana vendor that sold marijuana and various THC products at these pop-up events.

7. On September 26, 2023, an employee of Cooperating Defendant's marijuana vending business, hereafter referred to as Cooperating Source #1, provided information that Cooperating Defendant was renting a warehouse at 11010 Air Park Road in Ashland, Virginia, 23005 ("the Ashland warehouse"). Cooperating Source #1 believed the location to be utilized to store bulk marijuana.

8. Based on this information, law enforcement began conducting surveillance on the Ashland warehouse. Between October and November 2023, law enforcement observed Cooperating Defendant, along with several co-conspirators, accessing the warehouse on several occasions.

9. On November 21, 2023, United States Magistrate Judge Mark R. Colombell signed a federal search warrant for real-time location data and historical location data associated with cellular telephone number (804) XXX-XXXX, a phone utilized by Cooperating Defendant. A second search warrant was signed authorizing the installation of a GPS tracking device on a 2022 Toyota Tundra bearing Virginia license TUN5233 registered to Cooperating Defendant.

10. On November 22, 2023, location data associated with Cooperating Defendant indicated that Cooperating Defendant was in Fortuna, California, a location where Cooperating Defendant was known to source marijuana. Real time location data showed Cooperating Defendant's returning to the metro Richmond, Virginia area, in the early morning hours of November 27, 2023.

11. Later on the morning of November 27, 2023, with Cooperating Defendant back in the Richmond area, law enforcement followed Cooperating Defendant to the Ashland warehouse. At 12:46pm, Cooperating Defendant was followed by law enforcement from the Ashland warehouse to the Hanover Municipal Airport, located at 9500 Sliding Hill Road, Ashland, Virginia, 23005. Cooperating Defendant was observed pulling past a locked gate, onto the airport tarmac, and backing his vehicle up next to a Cessna airplane bearing tail number N6499N. Law enforcement observed Cooperating Defendant and the pilot, later identified as Quentin Carl HELGREN, remove several large black bags from the Cessna airplane and place them into the Cooperating Defendant's vehicle. Law enforcement followed Cooperating Defendant back to the Ashland warehouse. At approximately 1:11 pm, Cooperating Defendant pulled the vehicle into the Ashland warehouse and the garage door was closed. Around the same time, law enforcement observed HELGREN start up the Cessna airplane and takeoff from the Hanover Municipal Airport runway.

12. Later that afternoon, United States Magistrate Judge Mark R. Colombell signed a federal search warrant for the Ashland warehouse. During execution of the search warrant, law enforcement detained Cooperating Defendant and a search of the warehouse resulted in the recovery of numerous large black bags containing several hundred pounds of suspected marijuana. These large black bags appeared similar to the bags observed by law enforcement

being offloaded from the Cessna aircraft. Cooperating Defendant was subsequently arrested and charged on state marijuana trafficking charges.¹

13. The bulk marijuana seized from the large black bags from the Ashland warehouse were submitted to the Virginia Department of Forensic Science for analysis. On January 19, 2024, a certificate of analysis was provided confirming the green leafy material was in fact marijuana. In addition, the analysis confirmed an extrapolated total net weight of plant material at 90,758 grams (90.758 kilograms).

14. Through contact with the Federal Aviation Administration, your Affiant was able to identify the registered owner of the Cessna T-210N bearing tail number N6499N, who law enforcement observed meeting with Cooperating Defendant, as HELGREN, with a listed address of 3918 Maple Avenue, Oakland, California, 94602. A California DMV photo of HELGREN was obtained and identified by law enforcement as the pilot observed during surveillance meeting with Cooperating Defendant and offloading the black bags.

15. On December 15, 2023, and April 23, 2024, Cooperating Defendant was interviewed by law enforcement. Cooperating Defendant indicated that all of the marijuana located at the warehouse on November 27, 2023, belonged to him/her and that he/she had received the marijuana from HELGREN via aircraft from California at various times, to include a substantial portion on November 27, 2023. Cooperating Defendant indicated that this was the fourth trip HELGREN had made transporting bulk marijuana from Oakland, California to Richmond. Cooperating Defendant was able to provide the following details about his/her previous interactions with HELGREN related to marijuana shipments:

¹ Cooperating Defendant has subsequently plead to a federal conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute and distribute 50 kilograms or more of marijuana charge.

a. In approximately April 2023, Cooperating Defendant was introduced to pilot HELGREN by his/her marijuana source of supply. HELGREN offered to assist the Cooperating Defendant in transporting bulk marijuana from California back to Virginia utilizing his personal aircraft. Through further discussions, the Cooperating Defendant agreed to pay HELGREN \$12,500 in United States currency upon successful delivery of the marijuana to Richmond, Virginia.

b. In April 2023, Cooperating Defendant met HELGREN at the Oakland International Airport and provided him with approximately 80 to 85 pounds of bulk marijuana (36.29 to 38.56 kilograms). Several days later, HELGREN landed at the Chesterfield County Airport and met with the Cooperating Defendant. HELGREN provided the bulk marijuana and was subsequently paid \$12,500 in United States currency. Cooperating Defendant then drove HELGREN to the City of Richmond and dropped him off at a hotel.

c. In May 2023, Cooperating Defendant again met HELGREN at the Oakland International Airport and provided him with approximately 85 pounds of bulk marijuana (38.56 kilograms). HELGREN informed the Cooperating Defendant that the cost of fuel for travel was more than expected. HELGREN subsequently raised the transportation fees to \$15,000. The Cooperating Defendant agreed to pay the inflated cost. Several days later HELGREN again landed at the Chesterfield County Airport and met with Cooperating Defendant. HELGREN provided the bulk marijuana and was subsequently paid \$15,000 in United States currency. Cooperating Defendant then drove HELGREN to the City of Richmond and dropped him off at a hotel.

d. In September 2023, Cooperating Defendant again met HELGREN at the Oakland International Airport and provided him with approximately 93 pounds of bulk marijuana (42.18 kilograms). Several days later HELGREN landed at the Hanover County Municipal Airport and met with Cooperating Defendant. HELGREN provided the bulk marijuana and was subsequently paid \$15,000 in United States currency.

e. In November 2023, Cooperating Defendant again met HELGREN at the Oakland International Airport and provided him with approximately 120 to 130 pounds of bulk marijuana (54.43 to 58.96 kilograms). Several days later HELGREN landed at the Hanover County Municipal Airport and again met with Cooperating Defendant. HELGREN provided the bulk marijuana and was subsequently paid \$15,000 in United States currency.

16. On October 6, 2023, DEA TFO Vaughan Livengood obtained a federal search warrant for historical location data associated with (804) XXX-XXXX, a cellular telephone number utilized by Cooperating Defendant. On January 5, 2024, a second federal search warrant was obtained for historical location data associated with (608)770-6099, a cellular phone number utilized by Quentin HELGREN. The historical data of both was analyzed by law enforcement.

17. Analysis of this data showed that the cellular devices belonging to HELGREN and Cooperating Defendant were collocated in the vicinity of the Oakland Airport, Chesterfield County Airport, and the Hanover Municipal Airport during the meetings identified by Cooperating Defendant above in the April through November 2023 conspiracy timeframe.

18. In addition, law enforcement was able to obtain two airport receipts confirming HELGREN's travel to the Central Virginia region during the relevant time periods. A receipt from the Chesterfield County Airport indicates that one quart of 20W50 Phillips XC oil was

purchased for HELGREN's airplane bearing tail number N6499N on April 26, 2023. The oil was paid for with \$20 in cash. A second receipt was obtained from the Hanover County Municipal Airport showing that 30 gallons of fuel was purchased for HELGREN's aircraft bearing tail number N6499N on September 18, 2023. The receipt listed the customer as "Transient."


19. Law enforcement was also able to obtain receipts from two hotels utilized by HELGREN for overnight stays corresponding to two of the four trips made by HELGREN. The Moxy Hotel located at 501 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23219, confirmed an overnight stay for Quentin HELGREN, 3918 Maple Avenue, Oakland, California, 94602, on April 25, 2023. The Richmond Marriott located at 500 E. Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia, 23219 confirmed overnight stay for Quentin HELGREN, 3918 Maple Avenue, Oakland, California, 94602 on May 16, 2023. Both of these hotel stays corroborate the cell-site data and Cooperating Defendant's information on HELGREN's travel to the Richmond area during the relevant dates of the conspiracy.

Conclusion

20. Based upon the above facts and my training and experience, there is probable cause to believe that starting in or about April 2023, continuing through November 27, 2023, in the Eastern District of Virginia, Northern District of California, and elsewhere with the jurisdiction of this Court, HELGREN, along with other co-conspirators, did knowingly and intentionally combine, conspire, confederate, and agree with other persons, to commit the following offenses against the United States: to knowingly and intentionally distribute and possess with the intent to distribute 50 kilograms or more of a mixture and substance containing

a detectable amount of marijuana, a Schedule I controlled substance, in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 846 and 841(a)(1) and (b)(1)(C).

21. I declare under penalty of perjury that the statements above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.



David S. Phillips
Task Force Officer
Drug Enforcement Administration

Sworn to on this 10th day of May, 2024, in the City of Richmond, Virginia



Summer L. Speight
United States Magistrate Judge